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Agenda item 8

DRAFT REPORT

Rapporteur: Mrs. Sharon BRENNEN-HAYLOCK (Bahamas)

Addendum

PROGRAMME QUESTIONS: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1998-1999 (item 4 (a))

Section 18. Economic development in Europe

1. At its 20th meeting, on 24 June 1997, the Committee considered section 18, Economic development in Europe, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

2. Several delegations expressed their support for the proposed programme of work which clearly reflected the strategic guidelines of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 and the extensive reforms adopted by the member States of the Economic Commission for Europe. Those delegations welcomed the refocusing of the programme of work on priority areas for the region such as environment, statistics, development of international trade and assistance to economies in transition. Many delegations considered that positive results were anticipated since the streamlining and readjustments of the programme of work, that is, discontinuation of one subprogramme and of several subsidiary bodies, would bring about greater effectiveness and synergy within the Commission. The diversity of approaches to economic cooperation in Europe, as well as the Commission's role as a facilitator in fostering it, was also welcomed.

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3. Some delegations underscored the intensive relationship of the Economic Commission for Europe with existing regional and subregional and other structures, such as the European Union, the Western European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Central European Initiative, the Royaument Initiative for good-neighbourly relations and stability, the South-East Cooperative Initiative and others, with a view to strengthening cooperation on the continent.

4. One delegation noted with concern the increase of the overall resources requested under the section and considered that resources should decrease as a result of the streamlined structure derived from the reform process.

Conclusions and recommendations

[5. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it approve the programme narrative of section 18, Economic development in Europe, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.]